(b) whether any demand was made to India in the said meeting to lift restriction on imports;

(c) if so, by when; and

(d) the action taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (DR. BOLLA BULI RAMAIAH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) At this meeting of WTO Committee on Balance-of-payments-Restrictions, major developed countries were of the view that the present balance of payments situation did not warrant a continuation of import restrictions under the cover of balance of payments provisions of Article XVIII of GATT, 1994. They were of the view that India could protect its domestic industry through appropriate tariffs. The Indian delegation had pressed the argument that while the monetary resources position might appear to be satisfactory, there was need for caution and that certain areas of concern had to be taken into account.

In the light of the discussions, the committee agreed to resume the consultation in June 1997 to consider a plan, to be presented by India to eliminate the measures notified under Article XVIII and to conclude the consultations consistently with all relevant WTO balance of payments provisions.

Proposal to promote bilateral trade

918. SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal to promote bilateral trade and investment with Latin America;

(b) if so, the areas identified therefor;

(c) the steps taken to boost trade ties between both the countries; and

(d) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (DR. BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Bilateral trade and investment are sought to be promoted with the Latin American and Caribbean region in all areas of mutual interest to Trade and Industry of the two sides. Some of the areas that have been identified by the business sides include, power, telecommunications, steel, chemicals & pharmaceuticals, bio-technology, hand tools, auto components, etc.

(c) and (d) All general measures being taken to promote India's trade are applicable to this region as well. These include, exchange of business delegations and participation in exhibitions and trade fairs. Also, an Indo-Brazil Commercial Council was set up. Exclusive Indian trade promotional exhibitions were held in Brazil and Argentina. A Trade Agreement with Trinidad and Tobago was signed and initiatives were taken to revive trade with Cuba.

Economic cooperation opportunities

919. SHRI SANJAY DALIMA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether he visited a number of countries for exploring economic cooperation opportunities;

(b) if so, the details thereof, country-wise;

(c) the details of those countries who have agreed to accelerate the process and started their investments;

(d) whether any agreement has also been signed in this regard by Government with any foreign country;

(e) if so, the details thereof, country-wise; and

(f) the steps taken by Government in this regard and to what extent it has been successful in getting the foreign economic cooperation in Indian exports?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (DR. BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (f) **Cooperation Opportunities**

Name of the Country	Country-wise details and Agreement Signed
1. Bahrain	To address NRI conference from 1st to 2nd Nov., '96.
2. Dubai	To inaugurate "Expo India - 1996" from 6th to 7th Dec., 96.
3. China	Led the High powered Chief Executive Officers Mission sponsored by Confederation of India Industry (15th Sept. to 19th Sept.)
4. Hongkong	Addressed the gathering of the Indian Chambers of Commerce (20th Nov., '96)
5. Brussels	Indo-EU investment and Trade Cooperation Forum on 25-26 November, 1996. Economic Cross-cultural Agreement between India and European Commission was signed.
6. Zeneva	To participate in the High Level Segment of the 43rd Session of the UNCTAD Trade and Development Board on foreign direct investment on 10th October, 1996.
7. Brazil	For inaugurating the exclusive Indian Exhibition in Sau Paulo (3—7 Nov., '96)
8. USA	Attend the Meeting of Indo-US Commercial Alliance (15—18 Oct., 1996) for taking a meeting of the representatives of the PSUs/Boards of the Ministry of Commerce on 8th Nov., 1996.
9. Sinagpore	First Ministerial Conference of World Trade Organisation. (9—13 Dec., '96)
10. Kazakhstan	To inaugurate the exhibition organised by ITPO 8th to 13th October, 1996.
11. Bulgaria	Agreement signed on Trade and Economic Co-operation with Bulgaria at New Delhi on 4.12.96.
12. Kenya	For attending 'Made in India show' arranged by Confederation of Indian Industries at Nairobi from 14th to 16th August, 1996.

Economic cooperation with other countries has been the constant endeavour of the Government. In a fast integrating world it is important to establish partnership with other countries to that India can derive economic advantage in its efforts at maximising exports & developing the economy. Strong links have been established both at the bilateral level with various countries, as well as at the multilateral level & with important groupings like the European Union. ASEAN etc. SAPTA is fast becoming an important instrument for liberalising trade within the SAARC region. Apart from this, the Govt. has cleared 380 proposals involving foreign investment valued at around US $ 5 billion.

National and International Trade Fairs Organised by ITPO

920. SHRI GYAN RANJAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the national and international trade fairs organised and hosted by the Indian Trade Promotion Organisation during 1996-97; and

(b) the expenditure incurred and income generated by ITPO for organising the trade fairs during the above period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (DR. BOLLA BULI RAMAIAH): (a) ITPO participated in